



Eugene Outdoors!

A publication of the City of Eugene Parks and Open Space Division

WWW.CLEUGENE.OR.US/PARKS



Spring
News
2004

INSIDE NEWS

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| RiverPlay | 2 |
| Habitats | 3 |
| Stream Team | 3 |
| Natural Areas Diagram | 4,5 |
| Riverfront Clean-up | 6 |
| Natural Area Maintenance | 7 |
| Calendar | 8 |



RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

CAR-RT SORT

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE PAID
EUGENE, OR
PERMIT No. 360

Public Works Department
Parks and Open Space
1820 Roosevelt Boulevard
Eugene, Oregon 97402

NATURE IN THE CITY

A stroll to the top of Spencer Butte takes you through a dense conifer forest where western gray squirrels and black capped chickadees flit about in the treetops. Halfway up the butte, you'll pass a remnant upland prairie; a northwestern garter snake slithers off into the field. Farther up, you emerge from the forest onto Eugene's only rocky outcrop, a rare ecosystem in the Willamette Valley. Here, Anise swallowtail butterflies seek nectar from wild onion flowers. From the top are spectacular views in all directions, including the wet prairies of the West Eugene Wetlands, the riparian forests of the mighty Willamette River, and the conifer forests, oak woodlands, and savannas of the Ridgeline Park system.

One of the goals of the Parks and Open Space program is to provide diverse and thriving natural areas—from the woods in your “backyard” neighborhood park to the south hills that bound our city, along bike paths as they wind through community parks, such as Amazon Park, and all the way out to Meadowlark Prairie in west Eugene. This edition of Eugene Outdoors! is dedicated to these often undiscovered places.

Of the 2,900 total acres of park land in Eugene, nearly 2,300 acres, or 80 percent, are protected natural areas. These natural areas are found in 27 natural area parks comprising 1,500 acres. An additional 800 acres are peppered throughout many of the city's developed parks. Here are just a few examples:

- Tugman Park, a developed neighborhood park in southeast Eugene, is home to a glorious upland prairie filled with camas and buttercups every spring.
- Bethel Community Park, in northwest Eugene, has a remnant ash grove where one can watch flocks of geese migrating overhead.
- At Skinner Butte, a metropolitan park near downtown Eugene, tall bugbane, a rare plant, lives in the conifer forest on the butte's north face.

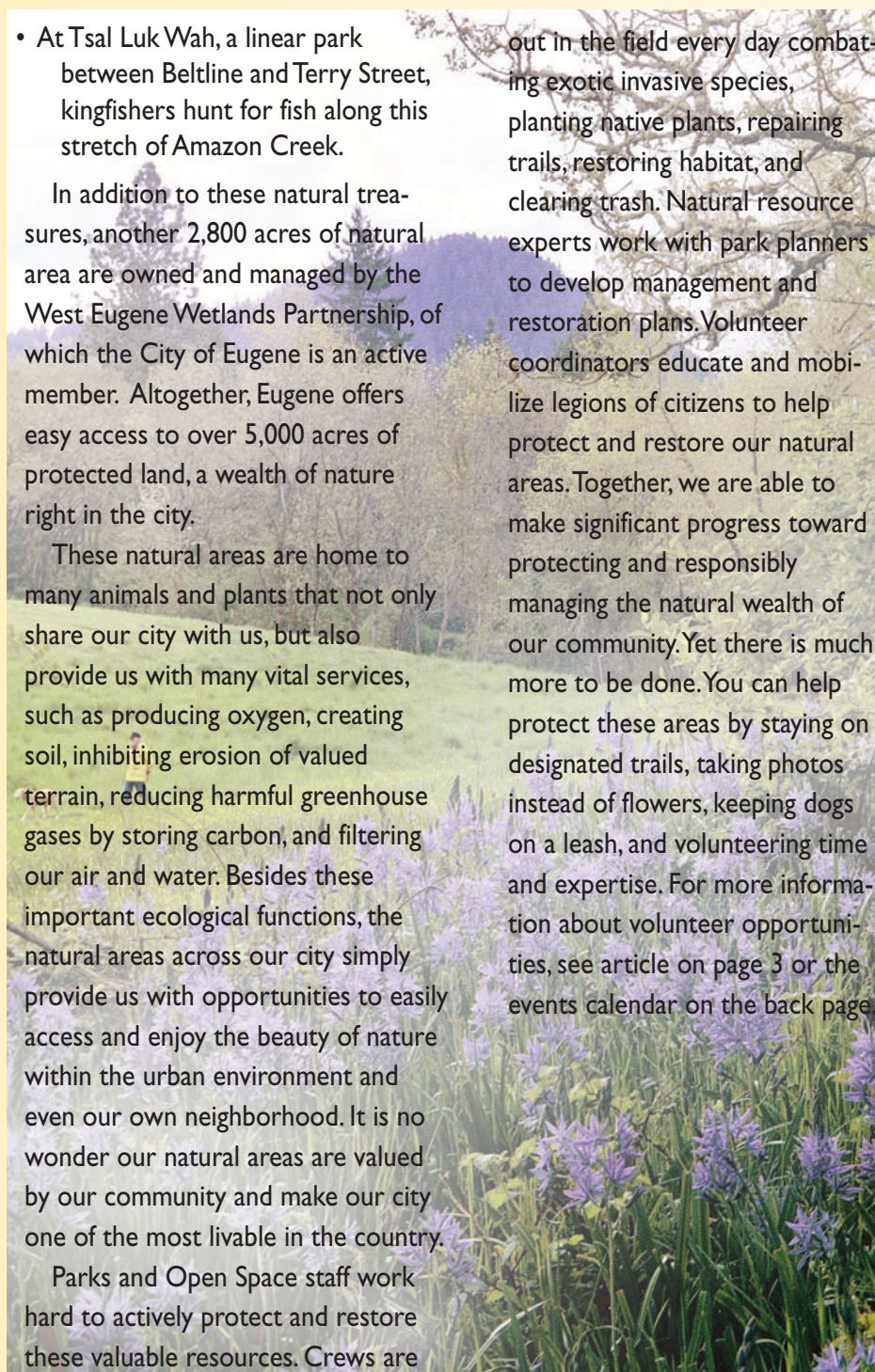
- At Tsal Luk Wah, a linear park between Beltline and Terry Street, kingfishers hunt for fish along this stretch of Amazon Creek.

In addition to these natural treasures, another 2,800 acres of natural area are owned and managed by the West Eugene Wetlands Partnership, of which the City of Eugene is an active member. Altogether, Eugene offers easy access to over 5,000 acres of protected land, a wealth of nature right in the city.

These natural areas are home to many animals and plants that not only share our city with us, but also provide us with many vital services, such as producing oxygen, creating soil, inhibiting erosion of valued terrain, reducing harmful greenhouse gases by storing carbon, and filtering our air and water. Besides these important ecological functions, the natural areas across our city simply provide us with opportunities to easily access and enjoy the beauty of nature within the urban environment and even our own neighborhood. It is no wonder our natural areas are valued by our community and make our city one of the most livable in the country.

Parks and Open Space staff work hard to actively protect and restore these valuable resources. Crews are

out in the field every day combating exotic invasive species, planting native plants, repairing trails, restoring habitat, and clearing trash. Natural resource experts work with park planners to develop management and restoration plans. Volunteer coordinators educate and mobilize legions of citizens to help protect and restore our natural areas. Together, we are able to make significant progress toward protecting and responsibly managing the natural wealth of our community. Yet there is much more to be done. You can help protect these areas by staying on designated trails, taking photos instead of flowers, keeping dogs on a leash, and volunteering time and expertise. For more information about volunteer opportunities, see article on page 3 or the events calendar on the back page.



NATURALLY PLAYFUL

Over the next couple of years, Eugene will be the proud home of two new regional playgrounds. The project, called RiverPlay, will bring a new playground to both Alton Baker and Skinner Butte parks, which are closely linked by the riverfront trail system and the DeFazio Bridge. Each playground will focus on a theme that is uniquely Eugene and strongly based on natural systems and values.

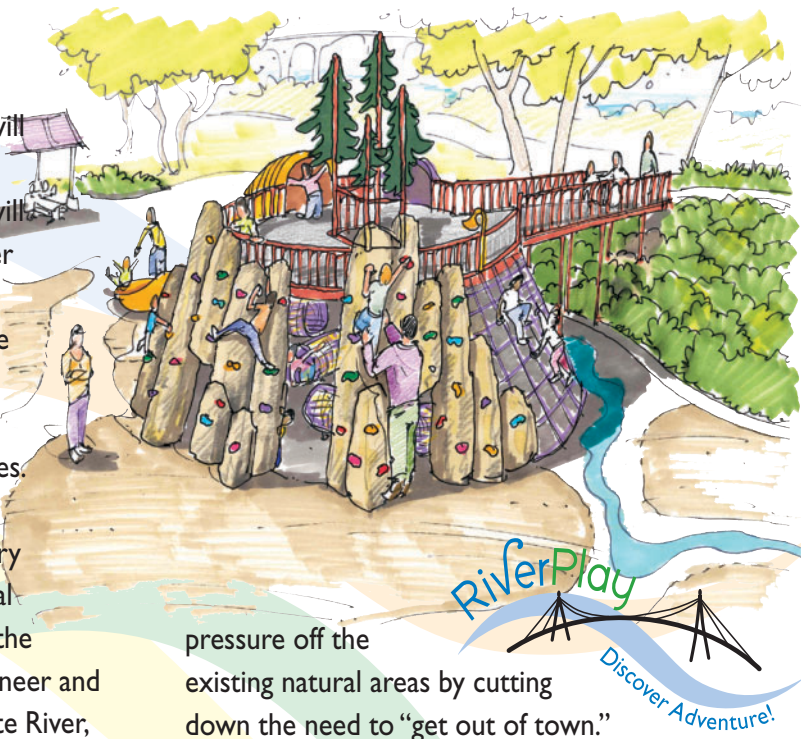
At Skinner Butte Park, children will explore Eugene's cultural and natural history through an archaeological dig revealing local flora and fauna over time, a play replica of the Skinner Butte climbing columns, model pioneer and Kalapuya villages, and a miniature Willamette River, originating at a "rain circle." The Alton Baker Park playground will invite children to explore the "wild river," a small-scale river cascading down from a mountain overlook, through falls and pools, and eventually into an "estuary plaza" of tidal mud flats. The estuary plaza will come alive with squirting clams and other, interactive water spray features and evoke coastal life through artist castings of clams, crabs and other coastal creatures. Tree house play structures imitate Eugene's forested hills, while a large, innovative net climber, reminiscent of the Three Sisters, provides the backdrop.

Aside from simply being fun, the playgrounds aim to foster in children a sense of curiosity and understanding of local natural systems, as well as take the

pressure off the existing natural areas by cutting down the need to "get out of town."

The playgrounds will provide safe, convenient sand and water play, the most popular natural elements for children, while inspiring children to learn more about and appreciate the real thing.

In partnership with the City of Eugene, the Eugene Rotary Club has pledged to help fund and build the playground at Skinner Butte Park, while the Eugene Lions Club and Eugene Active 20/30 Club have stepped up to do the same for the playground at Alton Baker Park. For more information about how you can contribute to this exciting project, call 682-4907. Construction begins at Skinner Butte this summer and at Alton Baker in summer 2005. Join us for the groundbreaking ceremony at Skinner Butte Park on Wednesday, June 23.





NEW PARKS WEBSITE


It's not just virtual. Find park maps, a calendar of events, information about volunteer programs, and more, and discover *real* fun in Eugene parks at:


www.ci.eugene.or.us/parks.

PARKS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

 **Arrowhead Park**, 1220 Irvington Drive: new play areas and field; picnic tables, benches and shelter; basketball courts; paths and nature trails; and many new trees to buffer the natural area along Flat Creek.

 **Awbrey Park**, Spring Creek Drive and River Road: new playground, accessible parking and walkways, a covered seasonal restroom, and new picnic tables and park seating. One of the innovative features of the improved parking lot is stormwater drainage through a bio-filtration swale, where runoff travels through a vegetated area to filter impurities such as heavy metals, oils and other foreign substances related to automobiles. The northern portion of the park will remain a wooded natural area with Spring Creek winding through it.

 **Frank Kinney Park**, W. Amazon Parkway and Martin Street: new pathways, a bridge, and sidewalks, as well as a small children's playground, benches, new native trees, and improvements to the Rexius Trail. Approximately 95 percent of this neighborhood park is dedicated to the preservation of native riparian and meadow habitat.

 **Milton Park**, 3300 University Street: new paths; play equipment and field; benches; trees and plants; and irrigation system.

PARK CELEBRATIONS!

 Grand openings at **Bethel Community, Trainsong**, and **Gilbert parks**, Saturday, June 12

 Groundbreaking for the **RiverPlay** playground at Skinner Butte Park, Wednesday, June 23 (see article this page)

 **Oakmont Park** Grand Opening, Wednesday, July 14 (see article page 4)

For more information, see the events calendar on the back page or call 682-4814.



Bethel



Trainsong



Oakmont

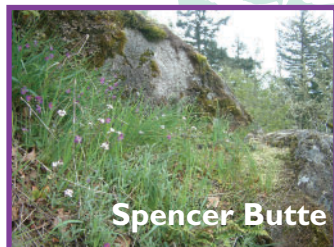
Eugene Outdoors! is published semiannually by the City of Eugene Parks and Open Space Division to share information about Eugene's parks and open space and encourage the community to enjoy our recreational facilities, parks and natural areas. Let us know what you think about Eugene's parks and open space. Contact us by phone, mail, e-mail, or through the web.

City of Eugene
Public Works Department
Parks and Open Space Division
1820 Roosevelt Boulevard, Eugene, Oregon 97402
(541) 682-4800 • Fax (541) 682-4882
E-mail: pos@ci.eugene.or.us
www.ci.eugene.or.us/parks

Therese Picado, Editor
Kim Mast, Graphic Designer
Bob Blanchard, Photographer

EXPLORING EUGENE'S DIVERSE HABITATS

Listed below are a wide variety of natural habitats found throughout Eugene's parks and open space. Pick up a free map of Eugene's parks at any community center, the library or the Parks and Open Space office at 1820 Roosevelt Boulevard, and begin exploring Eugene's diverse habitats today!

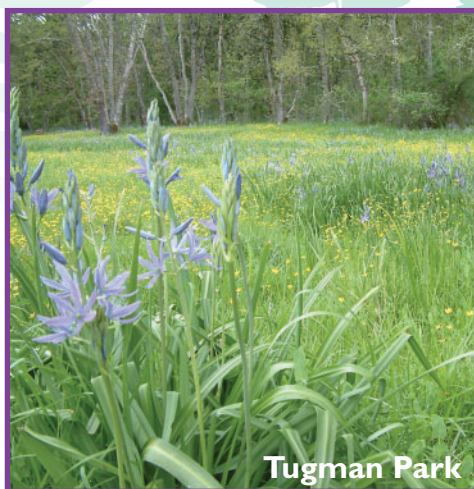


Spencer Butte

Herbaceous balds and bluffs: These rare ecosystems are typically found near the tops of hills where the soil is very thin and rock is close to or on the surface. Plants and animals of this community, such as the West Coast lady butterfly, are rare and unusual. Find this habitat at: top of Spencer Butte, west face of Skinner Butte.

Wet prairies and vernal pools: Wet prairies are a grassland ecosystem, dominated by grasses and forbs such as tufted hairgrass. The soil is high in clay and retains water near the surface. Vernal pools are common features within wet prairies. In these areas, water ponds during the rainy season but quickly dries in the summer. Species living in vernal pools often have very short life cycles. Blue calico and popcorn flowers are commonly seen in late spring. Find this habitat at: Amazon, Gudu-kut, Meadow-lark Prairie, and Skyview. (see photo of wet prairie page 6)

Upland prairies: Upland prairies are much drier than wet prairies. Fire was historically important in keeping this grassland ecosystem open. Roemer's fescue, a native prairie grass, and raptors such as red-tailed hawk and northern harrier can be found in upland prairies. Find this habitat at: Oakmont, Rasor, and Tugman.



Tugman Park

Freshwater marshes and ponds: These wetland ecosystems typically remain wet all year round and are home to a host of wildlife, including waterfowl, chorus frogs, western pond turtles, and great blue herons. Find this habitat at: Sorrel Pond, Walnut Grove, and Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker. (see photo page 5)



Oak Meadow

Dry evergreen forests and woodlands: Dominated by conifers, including Douglas-fir and western red cedar, these forest types define the Pacific Northwest. These successional forests appeared in the Willamette Valley when fire was suppressed and the conifers took over the vast prairies and savannas. Look for orchids such as the fairy slipper, striped coralroot, or rattlesnake plantain and wildlife such as red-breasted nuthatch, a bird that prefers dry evergreen forests. Find this habitat at: Amazon Headwaters, Blanton Ridge, and Hendricks.

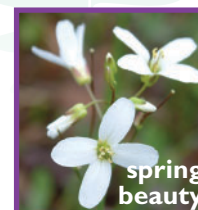
Riparian forests and shrublands: These habitat types are found along the edges of waterways and are dominated by deciduous trees and shrubs such as Pacific willow, black cottonwood, and white alder. These forests provide food and shelter for wildlife, including the endangered spring Chinook salmon, long-toed salamanders, beaver, and wood ducks. Find this habitat at: Alton Baker, Delta Ponds, Franklin, Maurie Jacobs, and Whilamut Natural Area. (see photo page 7)

Depressional wetland broadleaf forests: These wetland forest areas are often dominated by Oregon ash. Typically, these systems are wet for about nine months of the year and dry during the summer. Look in the understory for camas, buttercups, spring beauty, and common rush. Find this habitat at: Amazon, Bertelsen Nature, Tugman, and along Amazon Creek.

Savannas and oak woodlands: These upland ecosystems host a rich variety of grasses and forbs overtopped by white and black oaks. You may see woodpeckers, black-tailed deer, and gopher snakes here. Also look for Oregon iris and fawn lily in bloom in the spring and the rare grass California fescue. Find this habitat at: Gillespie Butte, Hendricks, and Morse Ranch.



Ridgeline Park



spring beauty

RETREATING TO NATURE

For many people, even driving by a pond, wetland, meadow, ash forest, or oak savanna evokes a feeling of calm. It is an unhurried place of nature, free of consumerism, schedules, or worries. Central Park in New York City exists today because planners long ago understood the relationship between open space and the well being of urban residents.

Besides providing a home for deer, bees, birds, dragonflies, frogs, fish, turtles and many other animals and plants, Eugene's open space areas, some of which are located at parks in your neighborhood (see locations above), provide us with outdoor

classrooms where we can learn about our connection to and dependence upon nature.

For many students who participate in Eugene Stream Team's tours of local wetlands and other natural areas, this is often their first experience in nature. They are so caught up in this strange environment that they are unable to listen or respond to the guides initially. The tall grass "tickles" their legs and arms in



unfamiliar ways, and their attention is completely captured by the tub of wiggling aquatic critters dipped from the pond.

Children are hungry for this connection to nature. Having open spaces throughout our community allows children and their families the opportunity to spend an afternoon watching butterflies and birds without traveling far. It also allows many school classes the ability to walk to a nearby natural area and maybe even adopt it and care for it as

a hands-on learning experience.

Open spaces also offer us their bounty. Stream Team volunteers help collect seeds from native plants in natural areas, cultivate them at the Native Plant Nursery, and plant them in other natural areas in need of enhancement.

Join Stream Team to learn about and help improve the quality of habitat in Eugene's open spaces. You can become a trail guide, help at the two native plant nursery sites, collect seeds this summer or salvage native plants from sites scheduled for development. For more information, call 682-4850 or e-mail lorna.j.baldwin@ci.eugene.or.us.

THREE SEEDS TO THE WIND

Oakmont Park, Eugene's newest neighborhood park, embodies a new way of thinking about park development in Eugene. Nearly all of the parks recently built include a balance of natural and recreational areas. Often, dedicated natural areas focus on protecting and enhancing existing woodlands or wetlands. Oakmont Park takes this a step further by dedicating a significant portion of the park to actually re-constructing native upland prairie, an endangered habitat type in the Willamette Valley.

The process involved using volunteers to hand-collect native seed from dozens of local native grasses and wildflowers and then hiring a nursery to grow the seeds into seedlings. Most of these beautiful, local plants had never been grown commercially. Seedlings were "plugged" into the natural areas so that they could get a foothold and spread. The native meadow areas, nearly two acres in size, were then seeded with other, more vigorous native grasses and forbs to give good coverage and help compete with weeds.

These areas will be allowed to grow tall (with the exception of a code-required fire break), providing needed habitat for birds, insects, small mammals and other creatures that depend on native prairie for survival. This also allows the native plants to set seed and regenerate by themselves. Once a year, or every other year, the areas will be mowed to keep the prairie open.

Native trees are grouped on the edges of the meadows, and a path winds through the natural area to allow visitors to enjoy the meadow. Other natural features, such as rocks and large logs, offer natural sitting areas that give further relief from the architecture of the city environment. The meadows also provide a buffer zone between adjacent homes and the more active areas of the park. For more information about the park and the grand opening scheduled for Wednesday, July 14, call 682-4915.

A PLACE FOR NATIVE PLANTS AND BUTTERFLIES IN DOWNTOWN EUGENE

Natural areas abound in Eugene, and many are closer than one might think. Native plants and herbaceous samplings can be found in the landscaping of the downtown park blocks on 8th Avenue between Pearl and Oak streets.

The City of Eugene decided two years ago to design a landscape plan that would bring native plant species found in natural areas to the urban park. So far, four beds have been replanted and the remainder will be completed over the next few years.

To many, these native plants are just as beautiful as their ornamental counterparts, but require less maintenance and irrigation and fewer pesticides. Since most of these are flowering plants, they provide the additional benefit of attracting native insects, including butterflies, which adds a healthy balance to the ecosystem.

"We wanted to create an interesting, yet sustainable and ecologically responsible landscape," said Brian York, facility design technician.

York wanted to suggest the plants' natural environment when he chose the combination of plants for each location. He arranged a variety of upland prairie grasses, which are typically found in open areas with full sun, in a south-facing bed. Another bed, nestled under the shade of several larger trees, houses plants typically found in a woodland community. For more information, call 682 5321.

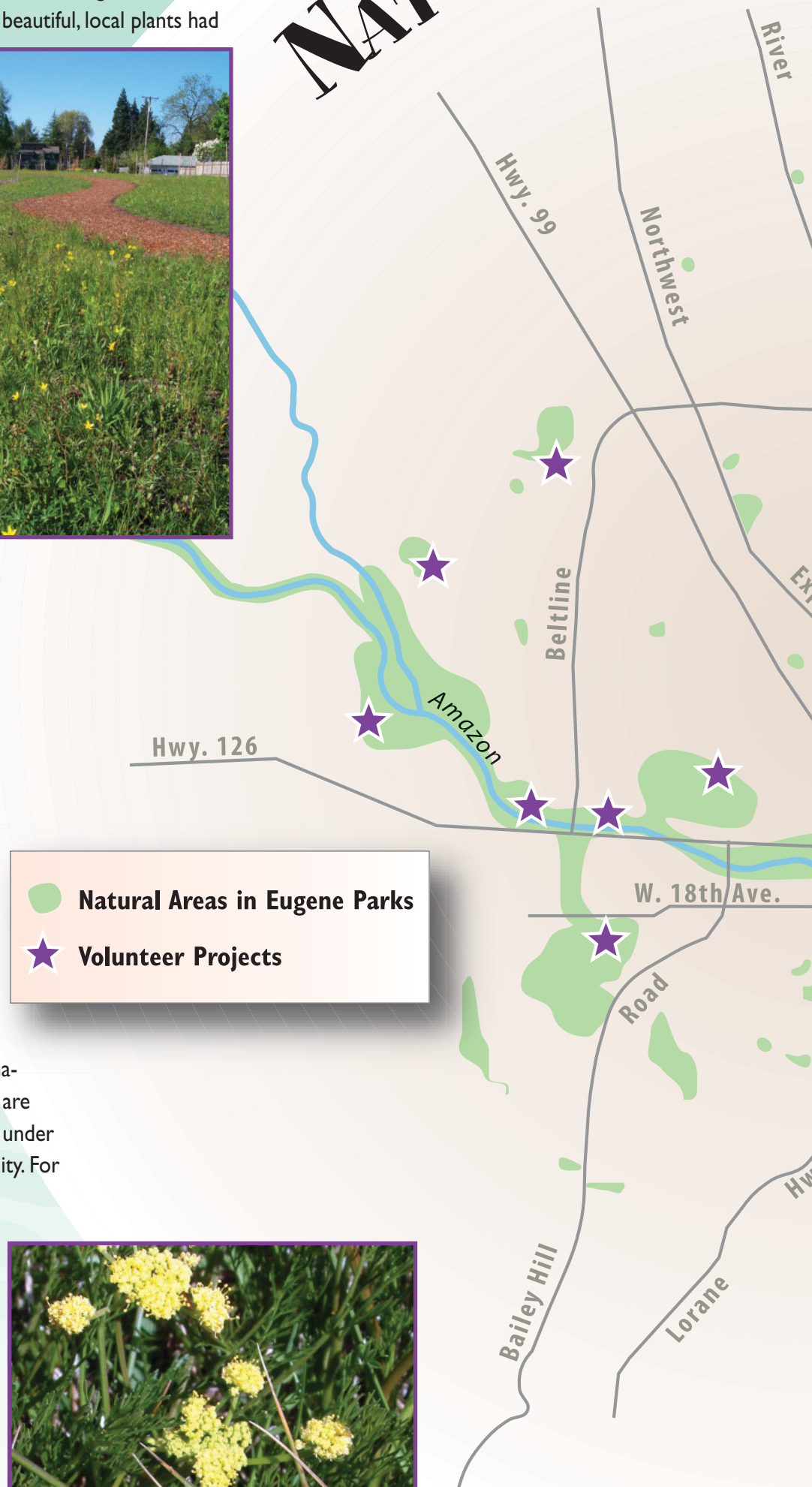
ENDANGERED DESERT PARSLEY IN AMAZON PARK?

On first view, the Bradshaw's desert parsley (*Lomatium bradshawii*) at Amazon Park appears to be a small, inconspicuous and relatively unimpressive plant. However, this member of the parsley family is actually a mighty little flower commanding significant attention and care. The population at Amazon Park is one of only 23 remaining viable populations in the world and is protected under the Endangered Species Act.

In 1995, the City of Eugene began monitoring and managing this population in an effort to increase the viability and size of the population. The site is mowed after seeds have matured and ripened. It appears as though the plant benefits from certain types of disturbances such as late-season mowing. The population at the park has increased from an estimated 6,662 plants in 1995 to an estimated 18,972 plants in 2000.



NATURAL AREA



-  Natural Areas in Eugene Parks
-  Volunteer Projects

AS AROUND EUGENE

ON DELTA PONDS

Imagine a place in the heart of Eugene where land and water converge to form the perfect habitat for fish, turtles, frogs, and birds alike. As the river rises in the winter, young salmon move out of the river to find refuge in these ponds. Turtles bask on logs in the warm sunshine. Yellow-rumped warblers dive out from the willows to catch insects. All the while, an osprey sits in a tall cottonwood tree finishing off a meal of freshly caught fish. Now imagine taking a leisurely stroll along a winding trail that leads you through this amazing natural area. Willows and creek dogwood line the shimmering water of multiple ponds and backwater areas.



While this already exists in a small section of Delta Ponds, the City, in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has launched a multi-million dollar project to make this exciting vision a reality throughout Delta Ponds. The plan is to reconnect the former river channel and gravel mining site back to the Willamette River and improve this unique natural area in the middle of our city. Already, Eugene Parks and Open Space staff and volunteers from Stream Team, six rotary clubs, and municipal court crews are moving in to begin this process by salvaging and propagating native species in Stream Team's native plant nursery and removing vast quantities of ivy, Scotch broom, blackberries, and other invasive vegetation. All this work is in preparation for earthwork to provide better connections between the river and the ponds and create additional floodplain habitat; planting thousands of native trees and shrubs; and creating trails, a boardwalk, and two new parking areas with viewing platforms along Goodpasture Island Road.

With persistence, hard work and community support, a revitalized natural area at Delta Ponds is possible. For more information about how you can participate in creating the vision, call Stream Team at 682-4850. For more information about the restoration project, call 682-4925.

IN SEARCH OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WEED CONTROL

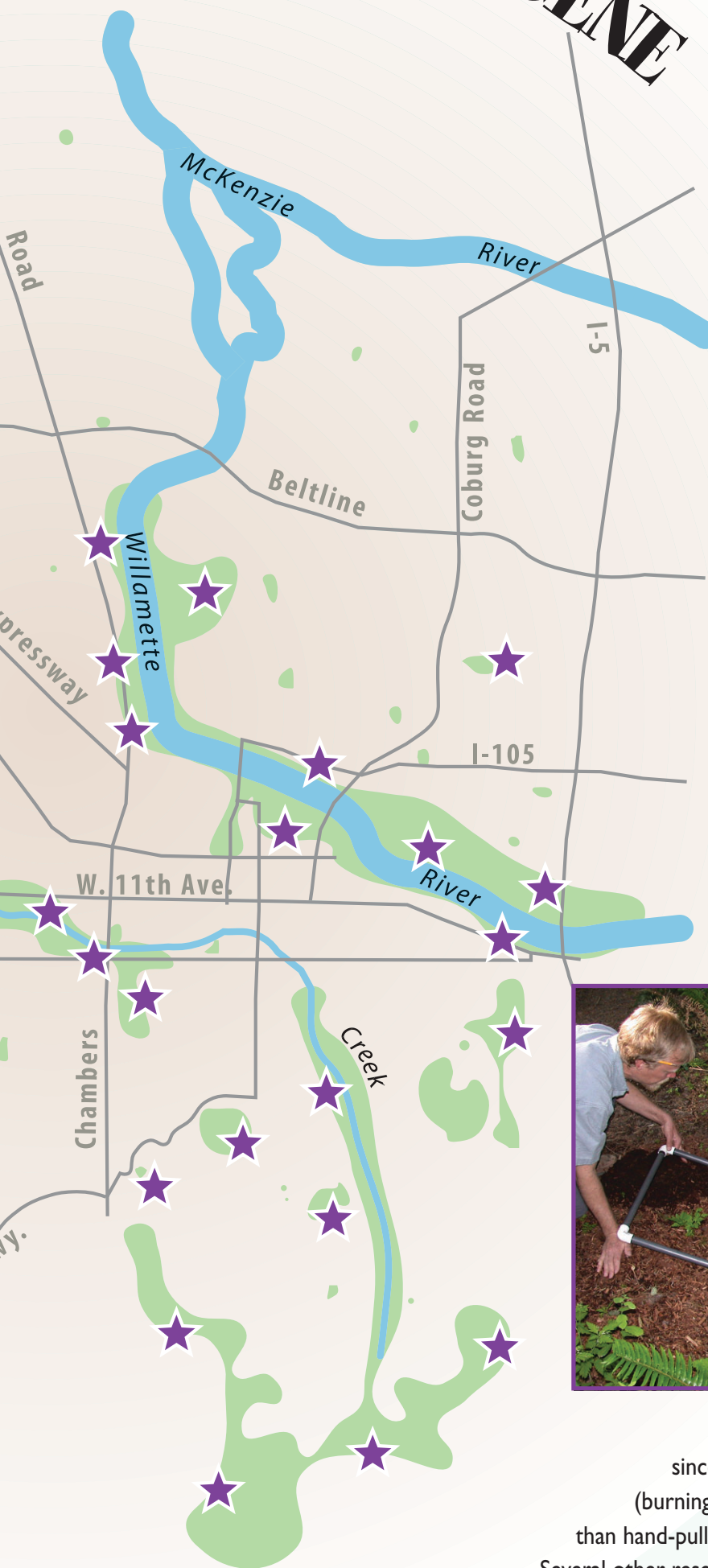
In spring 2003, parks staff partnered with students from the Service Learning Program of the Environmental Studies Department at the University of Oregon (UO) to investigate the most effective methods for controlling the spread of the invasive species herb Robert and nipplewort in Hendricks Park. Herb Robert and nipplewort have been identified as the most aggressive "secondary invasive species," or weeds that move in after ivy has been removed from an area. In the past four years since the Hendricks Park Forest Management Plan was approved, 16 acres of ivy have been cleared from the ground and nearly all of the ivy from the trees in the park, and the spread of secondary invasive species has emerged as a serious issue.



An experimental protocol was designed to test four different methods for controlling these weeds. The objective was to see which methods were most effective

at controlling the weeds and which did the least damage to the neighboring native plants. In the year since the test plots were established, very preliminary results indicate that three different treatments (burning and mulching, burning only or mulching only) all are more effective at controlling the invasive plants than hand-pulling them or doing nothing. However, the native plants fared better in the plots that were hand-pulled.

Several other research projects are currently underway to further investigate effective methods for controlling secondary invasive species as well as alternative methods for removing ivy. The results of this research not only provide information for better managing Hendricks Park but may be applicable to other natural areas within the city as well. In addition, the research has provided UO students and high school students with a hands-on educational opportunity, another important objective of the forest management plan. For more information about these research projects, call 682-5324.



KEEPING OUR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CLEAN

It's 7:40 a.m. on a Wednesday morning. Jersey and another park maintenance crew member are on the riverfront park route. Their first stop is just west of Maurie Jacobs Park, a popular site for illegal camping. Sure enough, they encounter two illegal campers and evidence of a recent camp—an extinguished camp fire, food cartons, beer cans, a pile of human feces, and two used syringes. Jersey, who uses this nickname to maintain his privacy off the job, uses the park stick to pick up most of the trash, but he meticulously picks up the syringes by hand and places them in a locked cylindrical container designed for biohazardous material. He talks to the people camping illegally, explaining that he is not a police officer but that it is against park rules to camp in City parks and open space, and gives them a written notice and a list of homelessness resources.

Day in, day out, Jersey and his colleagues on the park amenities crew perform the never-ending job of trying to keep the nearly 3,000 acres of Eugene's parks and natural areas clean and safe. In the last nine months alone, approximately 50 tons of trash were collected, including tents, tarps, bedrolls, blankets, and nearly 700 syringes. The sheer volume of trash makes debris in our parks and open space one of the most significant threats to the community's ability to keep our river and open waterways clean, protect natural habitats for endangered and threatened species, and ensure our parks and natural areas are safe, clean and accessible for all residents. "I feel I'm doing something important," says Jersey. "I'm determined to make our parks safe and clean for everybody—for children to freely and safely traipse over logs and skip stones by the river's shore; for bird-watchers in natural areas; for runners along our many trails."



Since July 2001, a year-round riverfront clean-up program has been in place, and Jersey has been the primary crew member assigned to developing and monitoring the program. In the winter, he and another parks worker travel the riverfront route two days a week, and, in the spring and summer when illegal activity increases, the route is covered three days a week. It takes approximately a month to cover the expanded circuit, which includes the Amazon corridor and the city's extensive open space areas. It appears as though the program has had a positive impact. Though the crew is still picking up approximately the same amount of trash, they are seeing fewer established and large-scale camps. "The best thing about this job is that persistence pays off," says Jersey. "The parks are safer and cleaner than they used to be."

Jersey's co-worker, who has been involved with park clean up for the past seven years, recalls how bad the situation was before the year-round program was implemented. "It took two staff two full days to clean up one abandoned camp in east Alton Baker Park," he says. "We found a cache of stolen goods – pocketbooks, keys and even 12 car batteries." Without a regular clean-up schedule, the problem became overwhelming, and other work, such as playground maintenance and upkeep of other park amenities, suffered.

A key aspect of the program is staff safety. Many of the people who use parks illegally are mentally ill or have drug and alcohol problems and can be physically and verbally assaultive. In addition, many of the camps are remote. Staff now work in teams of two; carry cell phones; have training in dealing with biohazards, vicious dogs and confrontational situations; wear appropriate clothing to protect them from biohazards; and are regularly tested for TB. As far as Jersey's co-worker is concerned, Jersey is an unsung hero. "Jersey is extremely hard working, intelligent and diligent," he says. "It takes a whole lot of work to do what he does; it's invisible maintenance, but if left unchecked, we'd have a crisis on our hands."



NEW AT MEADOWLARK PRAIRIE

Physical and virtual access to the West Eugene Wetlands was improved last fall with the completion of Checkermallow Access, a new viewpoint and parking area off of Royal Avenue, and the installation of a new controllable, pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) web camera. Now, visitors of all types can enjoy the wetlands and its diverse wildlife, including more than

100 species of birds, dragonflies, and a mosaic of colorful wildflowers.

Checkermallow Access connects visitors to Fern Ridge Path, Amazon Creek and the wetlands by providing spaces for 14 vehicles and a bus, bicycle racks, and a prime viewpoint of the wetlands. The name "checkermallow" refers to a pink, native wildflower that is common in wet prairies and is an important source of food for butterflies. Additionally, eight new interpretive signs at Checkermallow Access and along the Fern Ridge Path illustrate the natural, cultural and hydrological history of the area.

The Meadowlark Prairie webcam offers viewers a virtual panorama of the West Eugene Wetlands. The camera can be maneuvered using controls in the user's web browser to pan across an area, tilt up or down, and zoom in for a close-up view of the plants and animals that inhabit this beautiful natural area. To check out Eugene's only PTZ camera, log on to www.ci.eugene.or.us/parks/wetlands/cams/prairiecam.htm.

These features are the latest in a series of recreational, interpretive and restoration projects at the wetlands and prairie in west Eugene. Come visit the wetlands this spring in person or on the web as the more than 15,000 native flowering plants, grasses, and trees that were planted last fall bloom. For more information, call 682-4888 or visit www.ci.eugene.or.us/parks/wetlands.



EUGENE’S NATURAL AREAS A BALANCING ACT

Jesse Cary-Hobbs, lead worker on the natural resource maintenance crew, takes pride in a special place along the Willamette River in the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park. Here, tall larkspur, snowberry, osoberry, and tall Oregon grape abound, revealing



Cary-Hobbs points out an osoberry bloom.

amazing diversity for an area in the middle of the urban core. Just two years ago, this area was overrun with ivy and other invasive species, but, because the riparian, or river, habitat is considered one of the highest quality habitats in the city, it was targeted for ivy removal. Now, the area supports a vibrant understory for the riparian forest.

Everything about maintaining the city’s natural areas is about striking a delicate balance, says Cary-Hobbs. He and his seven fellow crew members are responsible for maintaining over 5,000 acres of undeveloped natural areas, including the Ridgeline trail system; urban streams, waterways and roadside ditches; and the

West Eugene Wetlands. It’s a delicate balance between overwhelming need and limited staff and funding. It’s a delicate balance to assess and prioritize the multiple needs of these natural areas, which may include maintenance related to the community’s safety, as well as habitat restoration. And, finally, it’s a delicate balance between providing recreational access to these natural areas and protecting special, fragile habitats.

The ash grove in Amazon Park is a good example of this balancing act. As the largest ash grove on public land in the city with a fairly unique set of wetland plant species, it received a high priority rating for proactive maintenance, and staff were faced with balancing the need for habitat restoration and limited resources. The crew supplemented their efforts with volunteers, youth crews and public education.

In 2001, Stream Team volunteers flagged cherry and other invasive trees, and, over the last three years, the crew has removed blackberry, ivy, and cherry, laurel, and holly trees. “At one time invasive species were everywhere that native camas, sedges and rushes weren’t,” says Cary-Hobbs. “Now the ash trees are budding out, giving the native plant communities of the understory a chance to re-establish.”

Across Eugene’s parks and open space system, high quality habitat is getting another chance, thanks to the efforts of the natural resources maintenance crew and countless volunteers. Five acres of ivy have been removed from Skinner Butte Park in the past two years, and trails have been improved at Spencer Butte, giving the Douglas fir forests the opportunity to thrive. Western pond turtles, a rare animal population, can be found at Delta Ponds, Golden Gardens Park, and Spring Creek turtle preserve. Wetland restoration is an ongoing process at the West Eugene Wetlands; over 400 acres were recently restored at Meadowlark Prairie, and this summer the crew plans to restore 65 acres at Dragonfly Bend, a new site north of Royal Avenue and Greenhill Road.

According to Cary-Hobbs, there’s no shortage of projects, and, more often than not, staff find the delicate balance. At Amazon Park, staff were challenged by the need to protect an endangered species but also protect the community from the risk of fire. They responded by implementing a delayed mowing regime that has allowed Bradshaw’s lomatium, an endangered species, to flourish (see article page 4), while ensuring the community’s safety from the fire hazard created by tall vegetation. In another example, trees had to be removed along the lower slopes of Amazon Creek to improve conveyance and protect the community from flooding. However, native plants have been planted higher up the bank to re-establish this important riparian corridor and provide adequate habitat for wildlife. “It is very unusual to find such high quality natural areas in the middle of the city,” says Cary-Hobbs. “With the help of community volunteers, we can continue to protect and restore these important natural resources in our community.”



tall larkspur

REFLECTIONS FROM YOUR URBAN FORESTER...OUR URBAN FOREST—NATURALLY RESOURCE-FULL

Many of the stories in this newsletter describe the myriad benefits natural resources in our parks and open space system provide. What, exactly, is a resource? It’s an asset you can spend, like your paycheck. How are trees assets?

Well, one large tree can add almost \$2,000 to your home’s property value. And did you know that three well-placed trees around your house can reduce your air conditioning bills by 20 percent by naturally shading and cooling your house?

A 2001 study that used satellite imagery to measure the tree canopy in Eugene calculated several important values of our urban forest. Among the most impressive data was the amount of air pollution removed by trees. Our tree canopy removes 812,000

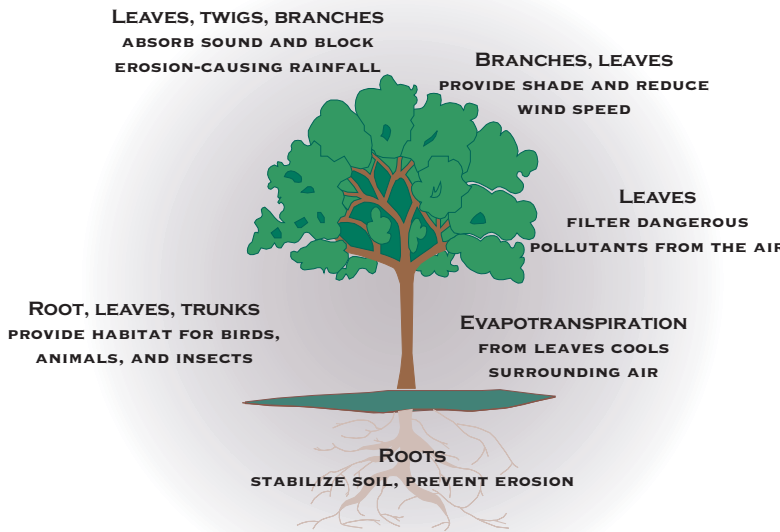
pounds of ozone, 350,000 pounds of sulfur dioxide, 876,000 pounds of particulate matter, and 190,000 pounds of carbon monoxide each year! Over 110 tons of carbon are removed from the atmosphere annually by sequestration, or storage, in Eugene’s trees.

Eugene’s tree canopy also slows the peak flow of a major rainstorm for over an hour, reducing total runoff by absorbing water and slowing the first flush of hydrocarbons and other pollutants off the street into our streams. Besides helping create habitat along our streams and rivers, trees improve water quality.

According to the Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis, trees in Oregon deliver a net benefit because the

benefits they provide outweigh the tree maintenance costs, including administrative costs, in the case of a street tree. For a street tree, that net benefit translates into a \$48 annual net gain, and, for a residential tree, an annual net gain of \$53.

Our urban forest is indeed an asset. Trees do their work naturally. They help shelter and shade us, cool us, clean our air, give us oxygen to breathe, and help purify our water. The bottom line is that trees are a net benefit. They sure are a resource-full safety net for all of us!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. “\$” denotes that the admission fee varies.

Ongoing Events

General Gardening at Hendricks Park,
Tuesdays, park office, 9a-noon, 343-3452.

Saturday Market, park blocks at 8th & Oak,
10a-5p 686-8885.

Lane County Farmers’ Market, Tuesdays &
Saturdays, park blocks at 8th & Oak, 10a-
3p, 431-4923.

Mercado Latino, Sundays, artisans, food,
music, produce, Washington/Jefferson
Park, 10a-4p.

West Eugene Wetlands Photo Exhibit, (5/23-6/
25), 5th St. Public Market, 345-1632.

Native Plant Nursery Work Party, Wastewater
Treatment Plant, Tuesdays, 2-4 p, 682-4850

Collect native seed and monitor natural areas
with Stream Team throughout the summer,
call 682-4850 for times and locations.

Celebrating the Milestones of Life exhibit, June-
Aug, Shelton-McMurphey-Johnson
House, 484-0808.

May 18

Raptors of the Wetlands field trip, BLM yurt, W.
11th & Danebo, 7p, pre-register 683-6494.

Rhododendron & Azalea Pruning Workshop,
F.M. Wilkins Shelter, Hendricks Park, 10a-
12, pre-register 344-4969.

May 20

Public Works Day, hands-on displays about
stormwater, parks, transportation,
airport and more, PW yard, 1820
Roosevelt Blvd, 7:45a-3p, 682-4800.

May 22

Youth Walk for Life, organized by Eugene/
Springfield Asian-American Youth, Alton
Baker Park & EWEB, registration 9a, walk
10a, cultural program 11:30a,
www.pacinfo.com/~esaay.

The Big Help Day of Caring, plant flowers and
pick up litter, Monroe Park, 1-4p, 682-5521.

Hendricks Park Volunteer Work Party, weeding
invasive annuals, F.M. Wilkins shelter,
9:30a-noon, 682-5324/607-4066.

Bird Walk with Steve Gordon, Stewart Pond
parking lot, 8a, 683-6494.

Family Wildflower Walk, BLM office at W. 11th
& Danebo, 1p, free, pre-register 683-6494.

May 23

Wetlands 101, guided walking tour, 1-4p,
682-4850 for meeting location.

May 25

Amazon Park Open House/Tour, Amazon
Community Center, 5:30-8:30p, 682-4914

May 26

Western Pond Turtle Talk, scientific presenta-
tion, BLM yurt at W. 11th & Danebo, 7-
8p, free, pre-register 683-6494.

May 29

RiverWalk/RiverRun, pledged event for HIV
Alliance, Alton Baker Park, registration
8a, run 9a, walk 10a, 342-5088.

Spring Butterflies of the West Eugene Wetlands
field trip, BLM office 751 S. Danebo, 1-4p,
free, pre-register 684-8973.

June 1&3

Hershey Track & Field Event, ages 9-14, N.
Eugene HS, (6/1) and S. Eugene HS, (6/3),
4-6p, 682-5312.

June 5

Compost Workshop, River House Compost
Education Garden, 301 N. Adams, in E.
Maurie Jacobs Park, 10-11:30a, 682-5542,
www.eugenerecycle.org.

We are Bethel Celebration, performances,
activities, food, music, Petersen Barn,
11:30a-6:30p, 682-5521.

June 6

Community Orchestra, Washburne Park band/
classical series, 6:30p, 344-0483.

June 12

Steep Hill Chase 5K Challenge, benefits Lane
County Special Olympics, Alton Baker Park,
\$, registration 9a, www.goodrace.com.

Grand Openings at Bethel Community,
Trainsong, and Gilbert parks, call 682-4814
for times.

Willow Creek Volunteer Work Party, W. 18th
Ave, just west of Bertelsen, 9:30a-12,
682-4927.

June 13

Juneteenth Celebration, celebrate the end of
slavery with free entertainment and
BBQ, Alton Baker Park, 1-4p, 334-6290.

The New Horizons Band, see June 6.

June 19

Vitality Run/Walk, sponsored by Downtown
Athletic Club to benefit American Red
Cross and Meals On Wheels, Alton Baker
Park, registration 9a, race 10a, \$ or
pledges, 484-4011.

June 20

Walk With Me Marathon & Half-Marathon
Walk/Run, benefit for FOOD for Lane
County, Alton Baker Park, 7a, \$, pre-
register, www.walk-with-me.com.

The Highlanders (bagpipes), see June 6.

June 21-August 20

Fun For All, free, drop in recreational
programs at Petersen Barn, Trainsong,
Churchill Sports, Sladden, Washington,
University, Monroe, and State St. parks,
M-F, call 682-5521 for times.

Rec & Roll, free, drop-in recreational
programming at Cal Young Sports
(Mondays only), Irving Elem. (Tues. only),
Tugman (Weds. only), and Mangan (Thurs
only) parks, call 682-5521 for times.

June 22

Walker T. Ryan’s Delta Mystics blues concert,
Petersen Barn, 6:30p, 682-5521.

June 23

Skinner Butte RiverPlay Playground
Groundbreaking, Skinner Butte Park,
11:30a, 682-4814 (see article page 2).

June 25

Movie Night in the Park: “E.T.”, free popcorn,
bring blanket, Washington Park, 9-11p,
682-5333.

June 26

Water Safety Day, music, food, demonstra-
tions, Alton Baker Park, 9a-5p, 682-7100.

Compost Workshop, see June 5

June 27

Accordions Anonymous, see June 6.

June 29

Cris Williamson, singer/songwriter, Amazon
Center, 6:30p, 682-5373.

July 2-4

Art and the Vineyard, art, wine, and music
festival, Alton Baker Park, 11:30a-8:30p,
fireworks Sunday, \$, 345-1571.

Freedom Festival, (7/4), area’s largest fire-
works display, family entertainment, food,
Alton Baker Park, 5-11p, \$,
www.eugene2030.org

July 4

Eugene Symphonic Band, see June 6.

July 6

J.C. Rico & Zulu Dragon, blues/jazz/rock,
Churchill Sports Park, 6:30p, 682-5333.

July 7

Concert at Scobert Park, Blair & 4th, picnic
6:30p, music 7p, 686-4646.

July 10

Willow Creek Volunteer Day, see June 12.

July 11

Emerald Renaissance Band, see June 6.

Tai Chi with Machiko Shirai, Scobert Park, Blair
& 4th, 1-2p, 686-4646.

July 13

Saint James/Woods Jazz, 9-piece ensemble,
Sheldon Comm. Center, 6:30p, 682-5312.

July 14

Oakmont Park Grand Opening, 682-4814 (see
article page 4).

Touch-a-Truck, cement trucks, sweepers, fire
engines, Petersen Barn Community
Center, 5-7:30p, 682-5521.

Concert at Scobert Park, see July 7.

July 18

Junction City Polka Band, see June 6.

Tai Chi, Scobert Park, see July 11.

July 20

Caliente, salsa, Churchill Sports Park, 6:30p,
682-5333.

July 21

Concert at Scobert Park, see July 7.

July 23

Whiteaker Neighborhood River Festival, activi-
ties, music, drumming, story telling, River
House, 301 N. Adams, 4-7p. 682-5329.

Movie Night in the Park: “The Princess Bride.”,
free popcorn, bring blanket, Washington
Park, 9-11p, 682-5333.

July 24

Hendricks Park Volunteer Work Party, see
listing May 22.

July 25

Party in the Park, dog activities and demon-
strations, food and craft booths, music,
Alton Baker Park, 11a-3p,
www.bearenfoundation.org or 242-3827.

Oregon Tuba Ensemble, see June 6.

Tai Chi, Scobert Park, see July 11.

July 27

CheeseBurgers, island/Jimmy Buffet favorites,
Amazon Center, 6:30p, 682-5373.

July 28

Concert at Scobert Park, see July 7.

July 31

Obon and Taiko Drumming Festival, activities,
dancing, drumming, food and craft
booths, Alton Baker Park, 5-9p, 484-4656.

PARKS FOR RENT

Shelters at Alton Baker, Hendricks,
Chanel Mulligan, University, and Irwin parks; the
gazebo at Owen Rose Garden; and space in any park are
available for rent. For more information about permits, fees, availability, and
rules, visit www.ci.eugene.or.us/parks/howto/park_rentals.htm or call 682-4800.

